

Inside Wallops

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NASA Creates a Bubble Bath Blizzard

It looked like a huge snowfall inside a NASA hangar, but the white stuff falling from the ceiling was actually a foamy mix of water and environmentally friendly chemicals that expands to smother fires.



Testing the new fire suppression system.

NASA Photo

It's a new fire suppression system designed to protect some of the most valuable assets at NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va. — its people, seven valuable flying laboratories and a significant building.

Technicians at NASA Langley have spent the last year and a half working to upgrade the fire control system in the hangar building, including installing additional sprinklers and new foam generators just for the 99,000 square foot hangar.

"The reason for the new system is to save the building and protect the lives of as many as 250 people," said John Hefner, facility coordinator. "This will improve fire suppression significantly. It's faster and better than we used to have in putting out fires."

To install the High Expansion Foam Fire Suppression System workers mounted 20 red canisters to the steel superstructure above the hangar floor. The hangar is divided into four zones, five canisters per zone.

The canisters are foam generators. Water pumped to them is mixed with a chemical concentrate to make a sudsy spray. That spray expands into a blanket of foam with

the help of fans that add air to increase the volume. "It's like a bubble bath," said Hefner.

To make sure the bubble bath worked, NASA had to do a complete test of the system after first running water through it. Crews moved the airplanes outside and workers erected six-foot high plastic barriers on each side of the hangar floor to contain the foam in 75,000 square feet of space.

Then they turned on the spigot, literally. "The system was very efficient," said Hefner. "Within 20 seconds it produced six feet of foam."

But how does six feet of foam get cleaned up? Just like bubbles the foamy suds burst — eventually. Within 10 hours the environmentally safe foam became a white powdery residue that was swept up and put into barrels, just to be doubly secure.

While Langley officials are glad to know that the new fire suppression system works so well, they hope they never have to see a real life demonstration.

Munitions Survey is Complete

The Visitor Center at the NASA Wallops Flight Facility has reopened following the completion of a survey for possible unexploded ordnance and explosives on the center's grounds.

No live ammunition or explosives were discovered during the survey conducted January 30 through February 24.

Recently studied historical archives showed that unexploded ordnance items and live munitions may have remained on U.S. Government property at the NASA Visitor Center dating back to when the U.S. Navy conducted operations at the site in the 1950s.

NASA Image of the Day for March 6, 2006



NASA Photo

Technician Durwood Dereng prepares to pull the external-power plug from an E17 drag-research model at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility on Sept. 8, 1950.

Wallops Shorts.....

In the News

KLTV – Palestine, Texas, "Proud of East Texas: Columbia Balloon Facility"

On the Road and in the Air

A team from Wallops will depart March 8 in NASA's P-3B Orion aircraft for sea ice mapping operations in the Arctic Ocean, Beaufort and Bering Seas. The mission is for AQUAAMSR-E and ICESat validation and calibration. The team also will be flying to Thule, Greenland, for ice sheet mapping. Bill Krabill, NASA Wallops Hydrospheric and Biospheric Sciences Laboratory is the principal investigator. The team includes George Postell and Rich Rogers, NASA Wallops Aircraft Office; Mike Singer, Pete Peyton, and Sam Broyles, AIRTC; John Valiant, Computer Sciences Corporation; Jim Yungel and John Scott, EGG.

Preventive Maintenance of the Island and Mainland Electrical Distribution System Completed by John Clauss, Maintenance Control Manager

The NASA Wallops Facility Operation and Maintenance Branch recently completed the biennial preventive maintenance on the electrical distribution system for the Island and Mainland.

This work was a critical process to ensure the proper operation of the electrical distribution system.

Wayne Webster, VT Griffin, is grounding the high voltage distribution system for safety. Webster is wearing a Category class 4 arc flash suit required by The National Fire Protection Association.



Photo by Tony Webster

Thanks to everyone for the cooperation, patience, and support of this event.

Double Elimination 8-Ball Pool Tournament March 9

Building F-3
(Rocket Club)

5:30 p.m.

\$5 entry

70/30 split to 1st and 2nd

Contact: Rob Cass at x2376 or
Robert.Cass.1@gsfc.nasa.gov



Women Builders of Communities and Dreams

March 8

11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Williamsburg Room, Bldg. E-2

In celebration of National Women's History Month, the Federal Women's Program, Women of Wallops will hold a panel discussion on the roles women have had in changing culture, history and politics.

For further information call Kathryn Redden at x2187.

Visitor Center Events in March

March 11 - "Flight Basics"

Learn how airplanes fly in this program about the basic principles of flight. Children will construct and test three different paper airplane designs. The program begins at 1 p.m. and will last 45 minutes.

March 18 - "Toys in Space" Video

Take a journey to the International Space Station! In this video, toys are gathered from around the world and sent to the Station to become science experiments. What will happen when a top is sent spinning in space? How can you play soccer in space? Physics principles are put to the test in space. The video begins at 1 p.m. and lasts 35 minutes.

March 25 - "Sun-Earth Connections"

Celebrate the spring equinox by learning about the Sun and how it affects us. Each child will make their own sundial. Materials will be provided by the Visitor Center. The program begins at 1 p.m. and lasts 45 minutes.

The Visitor Center, part of the Robert L. Krieger Education Complex, is open Thursday through Monday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission to Visitor Center programs is free. For further information call x2298.

Front Gate Receptionist Retires

Congratulations to Fran Birch, VT Griffin, who retired effective March 3. Birch was an I.D. Clerk with the Wallops Security Office for 19 years.

To Our Wallops Friends,

I wish to express our appreciation for the cards, flowers, food and other acts of kindness shown following the recent death of my mother.



Thank you,
Carol Purdy and Family

Inside Wallops is an official publication of Goddard Space Flight Center and is published by the Wallops Office of Public Affairs, Extension 1584, in the interest of Wallops employees. Recent and past issues of *Inside Wallops* also may be found on the NASA Wallops Flight Facility homepage: www.wff.nasa.gov

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UNDER CONSTRUCTION



Engineering Bldg.: Installation of concrete planking on the second floor continues and is over 50% complete.

Rough-in of the under-floor electrical and mechanical work is continuing. Masonry work on the stair towers will begin again within the next week or two. Elevator and sprinkler systems have been submitted and are under review.



Project Support Facility: The concrete slab is complete, as are the underground utilities near the building. The masonry walls are going up, with in-wall electrical and mechanical work going in as well.

Underground connections to existing water and sewer lines have been made. Work on sidewalks will begin soon.

Photos provided by Jerry Wall